

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

The listing of claims 1-13 below replaces all prior versions of the claims in the application. Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously presented) A buckle assembly comprising:
a buckle body having first and second openings;
first and second waist strap fasteners having first and second fastener coupling sections, respectively, configured for respectively coupling with the first and second openings, and having respective top coupling sections; and
first and second shoulder strap fasteners having respective bottom coupling sections configured for coupling to respective of the top coupling sections to couple fixedly the first waist strap fastener to the first shoulder strap fastener and the second waist strap fastener to the second shoulder strap fastener,
wherein each top coupling section comprises an arm perpendicular to a respective opening of the openings when the first and second waist strap fasteners are coupled to the buckle body.
2. Canceled
3. (Previously presented) The buckle assembly of claim 1, wherein each bottom coupling section comprises a channel configured for receiving a respective one of the arms.
4. (Original) The buckle assembly of claim 3, wherein each waist strap fastener comprises a main body and a narrowed section between a respective arm of the waist strap fastener and the main body, and wherein each bottom coupling portion includes a slot configured for receiving a respective narrowed section.
5. (Original) The buckle assembly of claim 1, wherein the fastener coupling sections each comprise a pair of guide arms and an inner portion between the top and bottom guide arms.

6. (Original) The buckle assembly of claim 1, wherein the buckle body comprises a release button configured for releasing, when pressed, the first and second waist strap fasteners from the buckle body.

7. (Currently amended) The buckle assembly of claim 1, wherein when each waist strap fastener is coupled with its respective shoulder strap fastener, and when each waist strap fastener is coupled to the buckle body, the arms remain exterior to the buckle body.

8. (Original) The buckle assembly of claim 1, wherein each waist strap fastener is configured to slidingly engage and disengage with its respective shoulder strap fastener.

9. (Original) The buckle assembly of claim 8, wherein when the first and second shoulder strap fasteners are coupled to the first and second waist strap fasteners, respectively, and the buckle body is coupled to the first and second waist strap fasteners, the buckle body prevents the first and second shoulder strap fasteners from being decoupled, respectively, from the first and second waist strap fasteners.

10. (Currently amended) A buckle assembly comprising:
a buckle body having first and second openings;
first and second waist strap fasteners, each having a fastener coupling section configured to couple to the respective openings of the buckle body, each also having a shoulder strap coupling section; and
first and second shoulder strap fasteners, each having a waist strap fastener coupling section configured for fixedly coupling to the shoulder strap coupling section of the respective waist strap fastener,
wherein the respective shoulder strap coupling sections and the respective waist strap coupling sections are arranged relative to each other such that, when the first and second shoulder strap fasteners are coupled to the first and second waist strap fasteners, respectively, and the buckle body is coupled to the first and second waist strap fasteners, the first

and second ~~should~~shoulder strap fasteners are spaced from the respective openings of the buckle body and remain exterior of the buckle body.

11. (Original) The buckle assembly of claim 9, wherein when the first and second shoulder strap fasteners are coupled to the first and second waist strap fasteners, respectively, and the buckle body is coupled to the first and second waist strap fasteners, the buckle body prevents the first and second shoulder strap fasteners from being decoupled, respectively, from the first and second waist strap fasteners.

12. (Previously presented) The buckle assembly of claim 10, wherein, when the first and second waist strap fasteners are decoupled from the buckle body, the first and second shoulder strap fasteners passively decouple from the first and second waist strap fasteners, respectively.

13. (Currently amended) A buckle assembly comprising:
a buckle body having first and second openings;
first and second waist strap fasteners having first and second fastener coupling sections, respectively, configured for respectively coupling with the first and second openings, and having respective shoulder strap coupling sections; and
first and second shoulder strap fasteners having respective waist strap coupling sections configured for coupling to respective of the shoulder strap coupling sections to couple fixedly the first waist strap fastener to the first shoulder strap fastener and the second waist strap fastener to the second shoulder strap fastener,
wherein, when the buckle body is coupled to the first and second waist strap fasteners, the shoulder strap coupling sections are offset from the respective first and second openings and remain exterior of the buckle body.